

Maryland K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program
Overview and Requirements for Program Participation
Updated: February 17, 2021

Governor Larry Hogan and State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen Salmon are committed to supporting Maryland schools returning safely to in-person instruction statewide. The COVID-19 Testing Task Force, Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) have developed a **K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program** to provide free COVID-19 tests for school systems and non-public schools as an additional resource to support schools that are open, or plan to reopen, **in March 2021 and remain open for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.**

The state will provide both rapid antigen point-of-care (POC) tests and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) specimen collection supplies proportional to the number of students and staff returning for in-person learning, based on the anticipated number of students and staff that may need diagnostic testing based on guidance from MDH. **This is a voluntary program.**

The program will provide schools with the **necessary information and resources to implement both rapid POC tests and PCR specimen collection processes in schools to test symptomatic students and staff, as well as asymptomatic students and staff who are determined to be a close contact of a person with confirmed COVID-19.** The allocations provided to schools are intended to support diagnostic testing rather than perform screening testing.

Schools may use tests to supplement existing screening efforts, but will be supplied based on a diagnostic based testing model. Schools will not receive additional POC tests or PCR specimen collection supplies above their determined allocation.

Critical Time-Sensitive Program Requirements for Participating Schools

Schools must have the following paperwork on file and procedures in place prior to the administration of any tests. Schools awaiting final approval for program participation should review and take steps to ensure these critical measures are in place.

- **Your school is required to hold an active CLIA certification and Maryland Laboratory License and keep these on file in accordance with state and federal regulations.**
 - If you **DO** already hold both:
 - You still need to fully complete a [Laboratory Licensing Change Form](#), and fax to the number listed on the form. Please be sure to indicate that you wish to conduct COVID-19 rapid antigen testing, and list the BinaxNow Covid-19 Ag Card.

- Once you fax in the form, as long as your CLIA Certificate is not expired, you can start testing immediately and the state will mail out an amended laboratory license with the relevant test category you have added.
 - Any additional questions can be directed to paul.celli@maryland.gov.
- If you **DO NOT** already hold both a CLIA certificate and Maryland Laboratory License on file:
 - You need to fully complete a [State Compliance Application](#) for a Maryland Laboratory License, as well as a federal [CLIA Certification Application](#) (\$180 fee every two years) and **also** indicate the BinaxNow Covid-19 Ag Card for COVID-19 rapid testing.
 - Application instructions:
 - Both individual applications are to be filled out and signed by the chosen Lab Director and emailed to paul.celli@maryland.gov. (For CLIA waived testing, the director at minimum must have a BS degree in a physical science, Biology, Nursing, etc.)
 - Upon your application approval, there is a roughly a two-day processing period, after which the lab will be invoiced \$180 by CMS for a CLIA waiver. There are no longer fees for state licensure or renewal; the state license does not expire.
 - Once the invoice is paid, the lab will receive a state license and a CLIA certificate of waiver.
- **It is required that you have an individual with qualifications per latest executive order on site to collect COVID-19 specimens for testing and process the test samples.**
 - This requirement encompasses any individual who is licensed, registered, or certified by MDH or a Maryland health occupations board who has appropriate training and supervision.
- **It is required you have access to Maryland's Health Information Exchange (CRISP) and have the appropriate personnel to report the rapid POC results into CRISP.**
 - See [Information on reporting COVID-19 test results](#) and [Training Video](#).
- **It is required that you ensure proper consent or authorization is obtained for students and staff including:**
 - Consent for a minor to be tested
 - Release of informed consent - Click [here](#) for a sample FERPA consent form..
- **Please complete testing training, as needed.** Training by Abbott on their BinaxNOW rapid POC test is required as part of the EUA. Further training info will be provided, including a schedule for online Abbott BinaxNOW sessions.

Testing Supplies and Distribution

School systems and non-public schools who opt-in to this voluntary program will receive both rapid antigen POC tests and PCR specimen collection supplies for students and staff in schools. MDH is providing the supplies of both tests and the processing of the PCR tests at a state contracted lab at no cost to schools. More details are provided in the linked Program Overview.

- ***Supplies:***
 - MDH will provide [Abbott's BinaxNow POC tests](#) to schools. A schedule of training sessions for using the tests will be provided with your registration package.
 - MDH will utilize [Mako Medical](#), a state contracted laboratory, to provide all PCR specimen collection kits including the return shipping boxes and pre-printed FedEx return labels for shipment of specimens to the lab for processing. Each school or school system will work directly with Mako for the following:
 - Training on administering the PCR tests
 - Online account set up
 - Reordering testing supplies during the program
 - Ongoing support, as needed, during the program
- ***Distribution:***
 - An initial distribution of testing supplies is targeted to arrive in participating schools by March 1, for registrations completed by Wednesday, February 17, 2021. Registrations can be submitted through Friday, February 26 to receive tests in the next scheduled distribution. The state plans to distribute supplies two to three times from March through June, depending on need.
 - A process will be available to request additional supplies, if needed before a scheduled distribution.

Technical Assistance: Schools will be encouraged to continue to seek Technical Assistance from their local health department or existing contacts within MDH. The Testing Task Force and the MDH Office of Population Health Improvement (OPHI) will continue to host the “Community of Learning” that we established late last year to provide a forum for schools to discuss testing with MDH and each other.

Email us with questions: MDH.K12Testing@Maryland.gov